

They may also prevent serious flu complications. During the current pandemic, the priority use for influenza antiviral drugs is to treat severe influenza illness (for example hospitalized patients) and people who are sick who have a condition that places them at high risk for serious flu-related complications.

Q: How can I help prevent the spread of germs that cause the flu?

A: Take everyday steps to prevent the spread of all flu viruses. This includes:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

EXPOSURES NOT THOUGHT TO SPREAD H1N1 FLU

Q: Can I get infected with the H1N1 virus from eating or preparing pork?

A: No. Novel H1N1 viruses are not spread by food. You cannot get infected with novel H1N1 virus from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork products is safe.



"A Safer Kansas Through Effective Correctional Services"

STOP THE SPREAD OF THE FLU

The flu season will last through the fall and winter. Basic hygiene practices are key. These include:



1. Cover your cough and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow; not into your hands.



2. Avoid touching the nose, mouth or eyes.

Flu viruses can be transmitted to hands when infectious droplets are left on hard surfaces for 2-3 days and remain infectious for up to 8 hours.



3. Wash your hands

Get into the habit of washing and drying your hands often.

4. Know the signs of flu

A sudden onset of fever, cough, extreme tiredness and body aches are the main signs of flu. Other common signs are headaches and a sore throat.



5. Properly dispose of all contaminated tissues.

H1N1

preparing
for the
flu

A Guide for Kansas Department of Corrections Parolees

September 2009

H1N1 Flu

A GUIDE FOR KDOC PAROLEES

Preparing for the Flu

Q: What is novel H1N1?

A: Novel H1N1 (initially called “swine flu”) is a new influenza virus. This virus was first detected in people in the U.S. in April 2009. This virus is spreading from person-to-person worldwide, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization signaled that a pandemic of H1N1 flu was underway.

H1N1 FLU IN HUMANS

Q: How does the H1N1 virus spread?

A: Spread of the H1N1 virus is thought to occur in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

Q: What are the signs and symptoms of this virus in people?

A: The symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people also have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

Q: How severe is illness associated with the H1N1 flu virus?

A: Illness with the H1N1 virus has ranged from mild to severe. While most people who have been sick have recovered without needing medical treatment, hospitalizations and deaths from infection with this virus have occurred.

Q: How long can an infected person spread this virus to others?

A: People infected with seasonal and H1N1 flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems and in people infected with the new H1N1 virus.

PREVENTION & TREATMENT

Q: Is there a vaccine to protect against the H1N1 virus?

A: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has established priorities for vaccinations. Until there are enough dosages for all individuals, it may be necessary to administer vaccinations based upon established priorities. An H1N1 vaccine is currently in production and may be ready for the public in the fall.

Q: Who is considered a priority group to receive the H1N1 vaccine initially?

A: The CDC has designated the priority groups as:

- Pregnant women
- People who care for children younger than 6 months
- Healthcare and emergency personnel
- People 6 months to 24 years old
- People age 25 to 64 who are at high risk due to chronic health disorders.

Q: Should I still get vaccinated against seasonal flu?

A: Yes. Getting a flu shot to protect against the seasonal flu is a standard health recommendation, especially for at-risk populations like young children, the elderly, or individuals with certain health considerations.

Q: When I report in to the parole office, how can I protect myself from contracting or spreading the H1N1 virus?

A: In the lobby area of the parole office where you sign in, there is a bottle of hand sanitizer. Prior to touching anything (counter, clipboard, report form, pen, etc.,) sanitize your hands thoroughly. After doing this, limit your touching to only necessary items and surfaces.

Q: What should I do if I get sick?

A: If you become ill with influenza-like symptoms, you should:

- Go home and remain there until at least 24 hours after your fever breaks.
- Drink lots of fluids and get plenty of rest.
- To the extent possible, avoid close contact with other people.
- Call your assigned parole officer and inform him/her of your medical status.

Q: What if a pandemic H1N1 flu outbreak is declared in my immediate community?

A: If an outbreak of H1N1 flu is significant enough, it may be necessary to make changes in parole operations. It is possible that the parole office is closed and all contacts are made by parole staff by way of phone and/or mail. Treatment groups/classes, group reporting and group meetings such as intake and orientation, travel permits, and interstate compact requests/transfers may be suspended for a period of time in an attempt to control additional spreading of the H1N1 virus.

Q: Are there medicines to treat H1N1 infection?

A: Yes. The CDC recommends the use of antivirals for the treatment and/or prevention of infection with the H1N1 flu virus.

If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster.